no reason to believe, however, that such early prohibitions 582
differed too greatly from those formulated by the Prophet. §39
Specifically, it is forbidden for persons to marry their
grandparents, parents, the brothers and sisters of their
parents, and their own brothers and sisters. Further, [595]
saying that polygyny is permitted, a man is prohibited from [587]
having two sisters as his wives. Only if one sister dies,
is he permitted to wed the survivor. Finally, an infant 582
whose mother cannot feed him is often given to a wet-nurse, 608●
and this person, no matter what her status (in Rowandus [553]
she is typically a villager) becomes his "mother." In
later life he is under the same restrictions toward her
and her kindred as he is toward his own mother, for ex-
ample, he can never marry her daughter. The townspeople
of Rowandus provided rationalizations for some of these
matters, and they are subtended here with little comment.
The rule that a man could not be married to two sisters
simultaneously was explained by the usage that a husband [601]
habitually addressed his parents-in-law as "father" and [606]
"mother," his brother-in-law as "brother," and his sister- [607]
in-law as "sister," although, as will be seen, there are
also separate terms for relatives by marriage. A man
cannot take the sister of his wife as a second bride, it
was said, because it was as if she were his real "sister,"
as he called her. In Kurdistan descent is commonly dis- 611
covered in two ways, through the blood (khwe) of the
parents and through the milk (shir) of the mother. Great [853]

importance is attached to marriage, and the ultimate curse of a mother toward her offspring, the worst of curses, is the wish that her "milk should never have been a misfortune in his mouth." It is forbidden for children who have been nursed at the same breast to marry and for this reason a youth can never wed his foster-sister, the daughter of his wet-nurse. It must be noted that in selecting a wet nurse, one with whose daughter an advantageous marriage might be subsequently arranged is never sought, but rather some woman of the lower classes or of the villages. Neither of these explanations, nor a third, that of descent through "blood," can be expanded to explain the prohibition of marriage between two generations. To amplify this statement, one cannot marry his sister "because they have been nursed at the same breast," but the rationale does not apply to an aunt who is similarly forbidden.

611 853 582 834 609 611 853

Islamic law permits a man to take four wives if he so chooses. This, however, in its full realization presents many more obstacles than are immediately apparent. First, he must pay separate dowries for each spouse, and the dowry, as has been seen, as well as the feeding, clothing, and maintenance, of a single wife is not an inexpensive undertaking. Polygyny, then, is more often than not the prerogative of the extremely wealthy. At the same time, the threat to connubial happiness in maintaining two or more wives under the same roof is widely recognized in the Middle East, and there are many examples, in literature and in popular speech, of the intense jealousy developed in such

995 [596] [578]

purchase bread which he distributes to his neighbors among 851
the townspeople. The ceremony for the first son is much
more extravagant than that held for girls and subsequent
male children. Twins are thought to be a blessing, "a 845
gift of God," and there is a "ceremony double in size" for
them. Albinism seems to be unknown in Rowanduz. Deformed 732
infants, if they survive, are kept within the house, and
their parents "thank God for them" just as with normal
children.

Infants are fed at the breast for a period of varying 853
length, from six to twenty-four months. Renewed pregnancy
requires weaning, because it is held that the milk is then
"[illegible] for the [illegible] child." If the mother cannot
suckle her child, a wet-nurse is obtained, and she becomes, [608]
as noticed previously, its foster-mother, dirna, and the
child cannot marry one of her children in later life. The
wet-nurse remains in the home of the infant, and is sub-
sidized with money and food. In the event that a nurse
cannot be obtained, the child is fed with the fresh milk
of goats, sheep, or cattle. Infants are not nursed at
regular periods, but whenever the mother feels it is
necessary, nor are they suckled every time they cry. It 856
is said that "crying develops the voice," and they are
often left unnoticed in this respect for some length of
time.

The cradle is of wood, and consists of a flat wooden 854
bed raised between four flat legs which are curved to join 352
above it in two arches. The arches are connected by a